

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00
PM-03 SP-02 L-01 INR-05 INRE-00 CIAE-00 MC-01 EB-04
ACDA-10 TRSE-00 /054 W
-----092004Z 090943 /53

O 091835Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1442
SECDEF

CONFIDENTIAL LONDON 04004

LIMDIS

NOFORN

DEFENSE PASS TO ASD/ISA AND DIA

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: UK, SU, BEXP, MASS
SUBJECT: WINSTON CHURCHILL'S VIEWS ON SALE OF UK ENGINE
COMPONENTS TO USSR

REF: LONDON 2816

1. UPON RETURN FROM A VISIT WITH US FORCES IN GERMANY
THE EVENING OF 8 MARCH 1977, WINSTON CHURCHILL (SHADOW
SPOKESMAN ON DEFENSE), IN CONVERSATION WITH US AIR
ATTACHE (AIRA) ASKED IF CALLAGHAN WAS STILL GOING TO
WASHINGTON. IN RESPONSE TO AIRA'S AFFIRMATIVE REPLY
CHURCHILL SAID, "WELL, I CERTAINLY HOPE THAT SOMEONE
IN YOUR GOVERNMENT LAYS DOWN THE LAW TO MY GOVERNMENT
ABOUT INCREASING THE RANGE OF THE BACKFIRE." CHURCHILL
EXPLAINED HE WAS REFERRING TO THE LUCAS AEROSPACE AND
PLESSEY AEROSPACE SALE OF CONCORDE ENGINE COMPONENTS
TO THE USSR FOR THE TU-144 CONCORDSKI SUPERSONIC AIR-
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LINER. HE THEN SAID THAT PRESIDENT CARTER OR SECRETARY
VANCE OUGHT TO GRAB CALLAGHAN OR OWEN "BY THE SCRUFF
OF THE NECK" AND SOMETHING TO THE EFFECT OF READING THE
RIOT ACT TO THEM ABOUT THE SALE. HE SAID THAT IF ANY-
ONE BELIEVED MOD MULLEY'S STATEMENT THAT HE (MULLEY)
WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE USSR WOULD ONLY USE THE ENGINE
COMPONENTS ON THE CONCORDSKI AND NOT ON THE BACKFIRE,

THEY WERE "OUT OF THEIR MINDS." CHURCHILL SAID IN HIS OPINION THE COMPONENTS WOULD GO ON THE BACKFIRE LONG BEFORE THEY EVER SAW A TU-144.

2. COMMENT: WE ARE NOT AWARE WHICH MULLEY STATEMENT CHURCHILL IS REFERRING TO; IT MAY HAVE BEEN MADE TO CHURCHILL IN PRIVATE. CHURCHILL APPEARED VERY SINCERE IN HIS BELIEFS AND WAS VISIBLY EMOTIONAL AS HE MADE THE ABOVE COMMENTS. WE INFER THAT CHURCHILL THINKS THE GOVERNMENT IS MOVING CLOSER TO APPROVING THE SALE OF THE ENGINE COMPONENTS TO THE USSR. REQUEST GUIDANCE ON RESPONSE TO MR. WELLBELOVED, UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE (RAF), DISCUSSED IN REFTEL. END COMMENT.

MILLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT, AIRCRAFT ENGINES, STRATEGIC TRADE CONTROLS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 09-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decapton Date: 22 May 2009
Decapton Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977LONDON04004
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770081-0645
Format: TEL
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770378/aaaacqum.tel
Line Count: 77
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 365f5ebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS, NOFORN
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS, NOFORN
Reference: 77 LONDON 2816
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3163412
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WINSTON CHURCHILL'S VIEWS ON SALE OF UK ENGINE COMPONENTS TO USSR
TAGS: BEXP, MASS, UK, SU, US, UR, (CHURCHILL, WINSTON)
To: STATE DOD
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/365f5ebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009